

Climate Smart Communities Meeting Minutes Oct 2, 2024- 5:00pm New Lebanon Town Hall

Present: Kris Cottom, Julie Fraad, Bob Gilson, Adelia Moore, Frieda Pearce, Elizabeth Poreba, Steve Powers. Bruce Schenker, Cathy Wilkerson

After approval of minutes, Steve provided updates:

The **Battery recycling program** to date has collected- 1161 pounds of batteries from four locations in town including an additional 100 pounds on Electronics Recycling day

The **Walkable Downtown**-proposal will be decided by referendum to see if residents agree to go out to 10 year bond to fund part of the proposal, which has been approved by the DOT and awarded a grant. Bob noted that the cost per family should not be large. Kris noted must be careful about terminology because for some people any cost will be significant. Previous to the referendum, there will be informational outreach to present an unbiased view of the proposal. The referendum will be on Jan 21, 2025, and absentee ballots are allowed.

New Lebanon's **CEC status**-is up to 9700 points. The Town is leading in our region, and our 5-star category entitles the Town to a \$250,000 NYSERDA grant assuming there is still money left. The money will be used for solar panels and a heat pumps and a battery backup for the Community Center. The Town has 3 months to submit bids for the work.

As for the **\$175,000 NYSERDA grant**, the solar panels are up on the garage though not yet operative because the transformer needs to be installed. The Town Hall panels were inadvertently turned off in August. Steve attended a webinar about a potential **tax credit of \$21000-** for solar installations and is not sure yet if the Town will be eligible. The contract for the **LVPA Water Tank** was finally signed

Plastic bag collection has garnered 597 pounds since Feb 9, 2024, leaving us 130 days left to make the 1000 pounds needed to win a park bench. Julie will inquire at local businesses that may be disposing of clear plastic.

Steve has just turned in the most recent **Hazard Mitigation** plan-based on the Cornell grad student's suggestions. He is hoping for the DEC grant for a culvert study in order to identify problem areas. 8 residents have made FEMA claims in the last years.

The third and last **Bike Tune Up Day** will take place at the Community Center on Oct 17 from 3 to 5. 200 bikes refurbished or repaired to date, with 66 bikes given out in 2023 & 24

There is a meeting on Friday with lawyers and engineers working on the **Landfill**. The current land owners have agreed to donate the land to the Town. \$600000 is allotted for 30 year maintenance of the site, and the DEC estimates there should not be any additional expense beyond the \$2.5million grant from the State. -

Steve will be a panelist in **Capitol District Regional Planning Commission's** workshop on Oct 18 @ HVCC. This commission assists towns working with NYSERDA.

Cathy reported that **Composting** is proceeding smoothly. An Oct. 19 pumpkin-carving party at the Community Center will produce much material that Cathy will bring to Chatham for composting.

Peg reported via Steve that the CAC is continuing to **test water** around New Lebanon and has done 125 tests to date, some of which are retests. The data collected will be helpful for the Wastewater Muni Water feasibility study. Testing will continue into 2025 depending on how much money is remaining in the testing budget.

A **Wastewater Feasibility Study** is getting off the ground with PERC testing along the Rte 20-22 corridor and surrounding streets to evaluate the soil's capacity to accept a subsurface sewage disposal system (septic system).

The **Trees for Tribs** are doing very well. The project will be given to the Rec Committee, but in the meantime CAC members make sure trees and tubes are ok. Volunteers may be needed to mulch the plants by November.

Nothing seems to be being done about the **stream erosion in the park**, and this needs to be remediated as soon as possible.

Adelia reported that the **Social Media/Education subcommittee** discussed presenting an EV education program, possibly in the library in December. There is a need for more material for Facebook posts, to be submitted to Steve. The next Repair Café-will be in New Lebanon on November 16 T from 10 AM–2 PM at the Community Center.

Attempts will be made to involve the Town’s High School students.

Liz reported that the **Free store-** continues to be popular and Alissa is enlisting volunteers to help sort the donations.

Bruce said attendance at the **September 14 Climate Carnival** was “a little low.” Though attendance estimates are based only on the number of cars (385), there seemed to be less “buzz,” perhaps the result of less publicity. Or perhaps it should have been held during the summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43pm

Next meeting date – Nov 05, 5PM, Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Poreba